

# ETHNOCENTRISM AMONG STUDENTS' ETHNIC CLUSTERS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF PAKISTAN

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## Article Info



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## Abstract

Ethnocentrism is a sociocultural phenomenon characterized by a strong preference for one's own ethnic or cultural group, often accompanied by disregard, animosity, or exclusionary behaviour towards outgroups. The main objective of this study is to compare ethnocentrism among university students. This study examines the prevalence and intensity of ethnocentrism among university students in Pakistan, with a particular focus on social segmentation within higher education institutions. Given the diverse provincial and cultural backgrounds of students, social cartels often emerge, influencing trust, cooperation, and engagement in intercultural interactions. The research was conducted in Punjab, Pakistan, which is geographically divided into upper, middle, and lower regions. A multi-stage sampling approach was employed to ensure a representative selection of participants. A total of 352 students were selected through proportionate random sampling from four randomly selected public sector universities across the country. Data were collected using structured surveys and interviews to assess whether students extend cooperation to members of different ethnic groups. The findings indicate that Punjabi, Pathan, and Sindhi students exhibit lower levels of ethnocentrism, showing greater cooperation and trust toward other ethnic groups. In contrast, Balti, Kashmiri, and Balochi students display higher ethnocentrism, facing challenges in intercultural interactions and social adjustment. These variations significantly impact academic collaboration and campus social cohesion. The study underscores the need for policy interventions and intercultural programs to foster inclusivity in higher education institutions.

## Keywords:

*Students' cartel, ethnocentrism intensity, social adjustment issues*

## Introduction

Higher education institutions act as a hub for diverse cultures, ethnicities, and belief systems, uniting students from a wide range of backgrounds. University life marks a critical transition, during which students encounter cultural diversity that can lead to either intercultural integration or social segmentation. Many students drop towards peers who share similar cultural, religious, or ethnic identities, forming social cartels that may limit their exposure to diverse perspectives. This situation raises worries about ethnocentrism, which is a social and psychological concept that affects how people interact with each other, relate to different groups, and communicate across cultures in schools. Ethnocentrism, broadly defined as the tendency to evaluate other cultures based on one's own cultural norms, often results in biased perceptions of cultural superiority or inferiority (Bizumic, 2022). It manifests in university environments, where students prioritize in-group affiliations, sometimes leading to exclusionary practices and intergroup conflicts (Moran, Abramson, & Moran, 2014). The issue is particularly relevant in Pakistan's higher education institutions, where sociocultural diversity is profound but often accompanied by group polarization and ethnically homogenous student associations (Hussain, 2020). The implications of ethnocentrism extend beyond social clustering, impacting students' willingness to engage in intercultural communication (McCroskey & Richmond, 2018). Research shows that people who are very focused on their own culture are less interested in interacting with other cultures. This can make it harder for them to work together in school and build global skills (Neuliep, 2020). Furthermore, ethnocentrism can exacerbate stereotypes and cultural misunderstandings, posing challenges to inclusive education and social cohesion within universities (Gudykunst, 2019). Despite the growing emphasis on globalization and cross-cultural awareness, there remains a gap in research concerning the intensity of ethnocentrism among university students in Pakistan. As schools work to create welcoming learning spaces, it's important to evaluate how much ethnocentric views influence how students interact with each other. This study looks at how common ethnocentrism is among student groups in colleges and universities. It focusses on how ethnocentrism affects social interactions, teamwork in academics, and communication between different cultures. By investigating this issue, the study seeks to contribute to the discourse on diversity management in educational institutions. This research could help policymakers, teachers, and university leaders create plans to reduce ethnocentrism and encourage a welcoming and diverse environment for students.

## Importance of the Study

This study investigates the prevalence and impact of ethnocentrism in higher education institutions, particularly in Pakistan. Despite the rich sociocultural diversity in Pakistan's universities, students often segregate into ethnically or culturally homogeneous groups, restricting interactions between different cultures. This restricts communication, academic collaboration, and global success. The research focuses on how ethnocentric attitudes influence student interactions in Pakistan's universities, shaping social dynamics and potentially creating an environment of exclusion and stereotypes. It also examines how these behaviors undermine inclusive education and social cohesion. The study offers a unique perspective on diversity management in Pakistani educational settings, potentially informing policy development and contributing to creating more inclusive learning environments. The findings could help create programs to reduce ethnocentrism and promote better communication between cultures, supporting students' academic and personal growth and improving their overall educational experience.

## Literature Review

Ethnocentrism is a well-documented phenomenon in social and psychological studies, reflecting individuals' tendency to judge other cultural groups based on their own cultural standards (Neuliep, 2017). Many studies have looked at how it affects schools, especially in diverse places where different groups tend to stick together and there can be conflicts between them (Bizumic, 2022). According to McLaren (2019), ethnocentrism significantly impacts students' social interactions, often leading to limited intercultural engagement and reinforcing stereotypes. Studies in higher education contexts indicate that

ethnocentrism shapes communication behaviours, affecting students' willingness to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds (McCroskey & Richmond, 2018). Researchers such as Kim and Kim (2021) emphasize the role of cultural intelligence in mitigating ethnocentric attitudes, advocating for enhanced intercultural education programs to foster inclusivity. Bennett (2020) talks about how learning about different cultures helps people become less focused on their own culture. Recent studies in Pakistan's educational sector have observed that students tend to form ethnically homogenous groups, often excluding those from different linguistic or religious backgrounds (Hussain, 2020). This pattern aligns with the findings of Ahmad et al. (2021), who argue that institutional policies promoting intercultural engagement play a critical role in addressing ethnocentrism. Furthermore, research by Shafique and Khan (2023) emphasizes that ethnocentrism can be countered through structured intercultural exchange programs and curriculum diversification. Another critical aspect examined in the literature is the relationship between ethnocentrism and academic collaboration. Scholars such as Gudykunst (2019) argue that a high degree of ethnocentrism among students can lead to academic segregation, thereby limiting knowledge-sharing opportunities. Conversely, research by Zhang and Zhou (2022) suggests that students who engage in intercultural interactions demonstrate improved problem-solving skills and a greater appreciation for diversity. Moreover, the role of digital media in influencing ethnocentric attitudes has been a growing area of research. According to Park and Lee (2022), social media platforms often reinforce ethnocentric worldviews by creating echo chambers where students engage primarily with like-minded peers. However, other scholars like Chen and Starosta (2018) highlight the potential of digital learning environments to foster cross-cultural awareness and reduce ethnocentrism through interactive engagements. In conclusion, the literature underscores the multifaceted impact of ethnocentrism on student interactions, academic collaboration, and intercultural communication in higher education institutions. While several studies have identified strategies to mitigate ethnocentrism, there remains a need for empirical research focusing on its intensity among university students in Pakistan. We can improve social harmony and include everyone in education by changing policies, updating curriculum, and offering training programs about different cultures.

### **Theoretical Formwork**

Ethnocentrism, a fundamental sociological phenomenon established by Sumner (1906), refers to the tendency of individuals to see their own cultural or ethnic group as superior and to perceive out-groups as inferior. This idea underpins the study, elucidating why university students often establish homogeneous social groups and may display bias or antagonism towards outsiders. Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory elaborates on this notion by emphasizing how individuals classify themselves into social groups, promoting in-group favoritism and out-group prejudice. In higher education, students frequently associate with peers of comparable ethnic or cultural backgrounds, so promoting ethnocentric perspectives and fostering social segmentation within universities. This concept offers a perspective for analyzing the establishment of social cartels and the effects of ethnocentrism on academic collaborations and intercultural exchanges.

### **Methodology**

This study was conducted in Punjab Province, Pakistan, which is geographically divided into three regions: upper, middle, and lower Punjab. A multi-stage sampling approach was employed to ensure a representative selection of participants. In the first stage, Punjab was divided into its three geographical regions. In the second stage, four districts Faisalabad, Multan, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad were randomly selected, with Islamabad included due to its high cultural diversity in universities. In the third stage, a list of public sector universities in these districts was compiled, and four universities were randomly selected: National Textile University (Faisalabad), Bahauddin Zakariya University (Multan), PMAS Arid Agriculture University (Rawalpindi), and International Islamic University (Islamabad). These universities were chosen because they host a diverse range of ethnic groups. At the fourth stage, university administrations provided lists of ethnic groups present in their institutions. Finally, we selected a total of 352 student respondents using a proportionate random sampling technique. Data were collected using a

structured interview schedule. After collection, the data was analysed using SPSS software. Employed both descriptive and inferential statistics, applying ANOVA to assess the variance in ethnocentrism intensity among different student groups.

### Results and Discussion

Ethnocentrism is a sociocultural attitude in which individuals perceive their own culture as central while evaluating other cultures through the lens of their own values, often leading to biased judgements (Sumner, 1906). This phenomenon influences social interactions, intergroup relations, and cooperation in multicultural settings. Ethnocentrism has been linked to challenges in cross-cultural engagement, social segmentation, and intergroup biases (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997). To measure ethnocentrism, researchers commonly use the Ethnocentrism Scale developed by Neuliep and McCroskey (1997), which employs a Likert scale to assess attitudes toward in-groups and out-groups. Respondents rate statements on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). This scale evaluates various dimensions of ethnocentrism, such as ingroup favoritism, perceived superiority, and attitudes towards cultural differences. Higher scores indicate stronger ethnocentric tendencies, while lower scores reflect a more inclusive and culturally open mindset. In this study, a structured survey incorporating a Likert scale was used to assess students' ethnocentric attitudes and their impact on academic collaboration and social interactions within universities. The findings provide insights into the role of ethnocentrism in shaping student dynamics and offer recommendations for fostering intercultural understanding.

**Table 1: Ethnocentrism (n = 352)**

Ethnocentrism	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	S.D.
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%		
Cooperation with different ethnicities	125	35.5	156	44.3	71	20.2	0	0.0	1.85	.73
Trust on different ethnicities	104	29.5	120	34.1	109	31.0	19	5.4	2.12	.90
seek help from my own ethnic group	110	31.3	82	23.3	124	35.2	36	10.2	2.24	1.0
Interaction with different ethnicities	113	32.1	137	38.9	71	20.2	31	8.8	2.06	.93
Respect for the values of other ethnicities.	85	24.1	173	49.1	76	21.6	18	5.1	2.08	.81
Respect for the customs of other ethnicities.	102	29.0	142	40.3	95	27.0	13	3.7	2.05	.84
Stereotypical perception about other groups	63	17.9	65	18.5	206	58.5	18	5.1	2.51	.84
Adjustment difficulties in intercultural/ social activities	49	13.9	84	23.9	175	49.7	44	12.5	2.61	.88

Table 1 represents the respondents' opinion about their ethnocentrism in the universities with different ethnic groups. The table shows that 20.2 percent of the selected students agreed that they did not cooperate with people who are from different ethnicities, whereas 44.3 percent disagreed, and 35.5 percent strongly

disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 1.85 with standard deviation. Overall, 73 students did not agree with the statement. Studies have shown that fostering cooperation among diverse student populations can enhance intergroup relationships and reduce ethnocentric attitudes (Johnson & Johnson, 2017). Moreover, the positive results align with findings that cooperative behaviour is often influenced by group interactions in multicultural settings (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). Only 5.4 percent of the selected students strongly agreed, and 31.0 percent agreed that they did not trust people who are from different ethnicities, whereas 34.1 percent disagreed, and 29.5 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 2.12 with standard deviation .90 show that overall selected students never agreed with the statement. Trust across ethnic groups is often a critical factor in intergroup relations. According to Ward et al. (2001), trust-building efforts in multicultural environments can improve perceptions of outgroup members. This resonates with the relatively balanced but somewhat cautious attitudes found in your data. Only 10.2 percent of the selected students strongly agreed, and 35.2 percent agreed that they were seeking help only from their own ethnic group, whereas 23.3 percent disagreed, and 31.3 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. The mean value of 2.24 with a standard deviation of 1.00 shows that the overall selected students never agreed with the statement, "I seek help only from my own ethnic group."

Almost 9 percent of the selected students strongly agreed, and 20.2 percent agreed that they disliked interacting with people from different ethnicities, whereas 38.9 percent disagreed, and 32.1 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 2.06 with standard deviation .93 show that overall selected students also never agreed with the statement "I dislike interacting with people from different ethnicities." Only 5.1 percent of the selected students strongly agreed, and 21.6 percent agreed that they had little respect for the values of other ethnicities, whereas 49.1 percent disagreed, and 24.1 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 2.08 with standard deviation .81 show that overall selected students also never agreed with this statement. Only 3.7 percent of the selected students strongly agreed, and 27.0 percent agreed that they had little respect for the customs of other ethnicities, whereas 40.3 percent disagreed, and 29.0 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 2.05 with standard deviation .84 shows that overall selected students also never agreed with this statement. Only 5.1 percent of the selected students strongly agreed, and 58.5 percent agreed that they had stereotypical perceptions about other groups, whereas 18.5 percent disagreed, and 17.9 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 2.51 with standard deviation .84 showed that mostly students agreed that they had stereotypical perceptions about other groups. About 12.5 percent of the selected students strongly agreed and 49.7 percent agreed that they felt difficulties in adjusting to new social/cultural customs, norms and regulations and participating in intercultural/social activities, whereas 23.9 percent disagreed and 13.9 percent strongly disagreed with this opinion. Mean value 2.61 with standard deviation .88 shows that the majority of the students agreed that they felt difficulties in adjusting to new social/cultural customs, norms and regulations and participating in intercultural/social activities. According to Deardorff (2006), challenges in adapting to new cultural norms are common in diverse environments. This finding is consistent with the literature on cross-cultural adaptation and highlights the importance of supporting students as they navigate intercultural transitions.

**Table 2 Ethnic comparison of ethnocentrism****a) Report**

Ethnic groups		Cooperation with different ethnicities	Trust on different ethnicities	seek help from my own ethnic group	Interaction with different ethnicities	Respect for the values of other ethnicities.	Respect for the customs of other ethnicities	Stereotypical perception about other groups	Adjustment to difficulties in intercultural/ social activities
Punjabi	Mean	1.69	1.99	1.93	1.91	1.89	1.96	2.63	2.38
	N	104	104	104	104	104	104	104	104
	S.D.	.725	.908	.978	.967	.891	.902	.914	.928
Sindhi	Mean	1.77	2.19	2.36	2.09	2.24	2.20	2.60	2.59
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	S.D.	.783	.767	1.008	.775	.600	.651	.493	.691
Pathan	Mean	1.71	1.91	2.19	1.91	1.95	1.77	1.95	2.51
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78	78	78
	S.D.	.605	.885	1.070	.942	.910	.755	.881	.879
Balti	Mean	2.21	2.14	2.46	2.18	2.25	2.32	3.11	3.04
	N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	S.D.	.738	.651	.637	.772	.585	1.090	.315	.508
Kashmiri	Mean	2.10	2.20	2.23	2.23	2.20	2.10	2.77	3.03
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
	S.D.	.712	1.064	1.040	1.135	.664	.712	.728	.928
Balochi	Mean	2.19	2.67	2.79	2.43	2.29	2.36	2.50	2.79
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
	S.D.	.671	.928	.898	.941	.835	.850	.862	.976



Total	Mean	1.85	2.12	2.24	2.06	2.08	2.05	2.51	2.61
	N	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352
	S.D.	.731	.899	1.008	.935	.811	.841	.844	.877

b) ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Cooperation with different ethnicities * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combine d)	15.111	5	3.022	6.058	.000**
	Within Groups		172.605	346	.499		
	Total		187.716	351			
Trust on different ethnicities * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combine d)	18.237	5	3.647	4.753	.000**
	Within Groups		265.510	346	.767		
	Total		283.747	351			
Help from my own ethnic group * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combine d)	24.871	5	4.974	5.182	.000**
	Within Groups		332.118	346	.960		
	Total		356.989	351			
Interaction with different ethnicities * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combine d)	11.025	5	2.205	2.579	.026*
	Within Groups		295.838	346	.855		
	Total		306.864	351			
Respect for the values of other ethnicities. * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combine d)	9.805	5	1.961	3.068	.010*
	Within Groups		221.124	346	.639		
	Total		230.929	351			
Respect for the customs of other ethnicities * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combine d)	14.632	5	2.926	4.339	.001**
	Within Groups		233.342	346	.674		
	Total		247.974	351			

I have stereotypical perception about other groups * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combined)	38.719	5	7.744	12.683	.000**
	Within Groups		211.255	346	.611		
	Total		249.974	351			
Adjustment difficulties in intercultural/ social activities * what is your ethnic group?	Between Groups	(Combined)	17.807	5	3.561	4.888	.000**
	Within Groups		252.091	346	.729		
	Total		269.898	351			

F-value (6.058) shows a highly significant variation ( $p = .000$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinions about cooperation with people who are from different ethnicities. The mean value ( $2.21 \pm .738$ ) shows that Balti students never cooperate with people who are from different ethnicities. Whereas Balochi ( $2.19 \pm .671$ ), Kashmiri ( $2.10 \pm .712$ ), Sindhi ( $1.77 \pm .783$ ), Pathan ( $1.71 \pm .605$ ), and Punjabi ( $1.69 \pm .725$ ) students were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means Punjabi, Pathan and Sindhi ethnic groups had more cooperation with people who are from different ethnicities, whereas Balti, Balochi and Kashmiri ethnic groups were having less cooperation with people who are from different ethnicities.

F-value (4.753) shows a highly significant variation ( $p = .000$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinion about trusting people who are from different ethnicities. The mean value ( $2.67 \pm .928$ ) shows that Balochi students were ranked first among less trusting people who are from different ethnicities. Whereas Kashmiri ( $2.20 \pm 1.064$ ), Sindhi ( $2.19 \pm .767$ ), Balti ( $2.19 \pm .651$ ), Punjabi ( $1.99 \pm .908$ ), and Pathan ( $1.91 \pm .885$ ) students were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. This indicates that Pathan and Punjabi Sindhi students demonstrated a higher level of trust in individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds compared to their Balochi, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Balti counterparts.

F-value (5.182) shows a highly significant variation ( $p = .000$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinion about seeking help only from their own ethnic group. Mean value ( $2.79 \pm .898$ ) shows that Balochi students were ranked 1st on seeking help only from their own ethnic group, while Balti ( $2.46 \pm .637$ ), Sindhi ( $2.36 \pm 1.008$ ), Kashmiri ( $2.23 \pm 1.040$ ), Pathan ( $2.19 \pm 1.070$ ), and Punjabi ( $1.93 \pm .978$ ) students were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means Punjabi, Pathan and Kashmiri were seeking help from other students. whereas Balochi, Balti and Sindhi students were seeking help only from their own ethnic groups.

F-value (2.579) shows a significant variation ( $p = .026$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' point of view about their dislike of interacting with people from different ethnicities. Mean value ( $2.43 \pm .941$ ) shows that Balochi students were ranked 1st who dislike interacting with people from different ethnicities, while Kashmiri ( $2.23 \pm 1.135$ ), Balti ( $2.18 \pm .772$ ), Sindhi ( $2.09 \pm .775$ ), Punjabi ( $1.91 \pm .967$ ), and Pathan ( $1.91 \pm .942$ ) students were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means Punjabi, Pathan and Sindhi students liked to interact with people from different ethnicities, whereas Balochi, Kashmiri and Balti students disliked interacting with people from different ethnicities.

F-value (3.068) shows a significant variation ( $p = .010$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinion that they had little respect for the values of other ethnicities. Mean value ( $2.29 \pm .835$ ) shows that the Balochi ethnic group was ranked 1st with their opinion that they had little respect for the values of other ethnicities, while Balti ( $2.25 \pm .585$ ), Sindhi ( $2.24 \pm .600$ ), Kashmiri ( $2.20 \pm .664$ ), Pathan ( $1.95 \pm .910$ ), and Punjabi ( $1.89 \pm .891$ ) students were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means Punjabi, Pathan and Kashmiri ethnic groups had more respect for the values of other ethnicities, whereas Balochi, Balti and Sindhi students had little respect for the values of other ethnicities.



F-value (4.339) shows a highly significant variation ( $p = .001$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinion that they had little respect for the customs of other ethnicities. The mean value ( $2.36 \pm .850$ ) shows that Balochi students were ranked 1st with their opinion that they had little respect for the customs of other ethnicities, while Balti ( $2.32 \pm 1.090$ ), Sindhi ( $2.20 \pm .651$ ), Kashmiri ( $2.10 \pm .712$ ), Punjabi ( $1.96 \pm .712$ ), and Pathan ( $1.77 \pm .755$ ) were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means Pathan, Punjabi and Kashmiri students had more respect for the customs of other ethnicities, whereas Balochi, Balti and Sindhi ethnic groups had little respect for the customs of other ethnicities.

The F-value (12.683) shows a highly significant variation ( $p = .000$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinions about whether they had stereotypical perceptions about other groups. mean value ( $3.11 \pm .315$ ) shows that Balti students were ranked 1st with their opinion that they had stereotypical perceptions about other groups, while Kashmiri ( $2.77 \pm .728$ ), Punjabi ( $2.63 \pm .914$ ), Sindhi ( $2.60 \pm .493$ ), Balochi ( $2.50 \pm .862$ ), and Pathan ( $1.95 \pm .881$ ) students were ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means the Pathan, Balochi and Sindhi ethnic groups do not have stereotypical perceptions about other groups, whereas the Balti, Kashmiri and Punjabi had stereotypical perceptions about other groups.

F-value (4.888) shows a highly significant variation ( $p = .000$ ) between the selected ethnic groups' opinion about whether they felt difficulties in adjusting to new social/cultural customs, norms and regulations and participating in intercultural/social activities. The mean value ( $3.04 \pm .508$ ) shows that Balti students ranked 1st with their opinion about feeling difficulties in adjusting to new social/cultural customs, norms and regulations and participating in intercultural/social activities, while Kashmiri ( $3.03 \pm .928$ ), Balochi ( $2.79 \pm .976$ ), Sindhi ( $2.59 \pm .691$ ), Pathan ( $2.51 \pm .879$ ) and Punjabi ( $2.38 \pm .928$ ) students ranked 2nd to 6th, respectively. It means Punjabi, Pathan and Sindhi ethnic groups never felt difficulties in adjusting to new social/cultural customs, norms and regulations and participating in intercultural/social activities, whereas Balti, Kashmiri and Balochi ethnic groups felt more difficulties in adjusting to new social/cultural customs, norms and regulations and participating in intercultural/social activities.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded that there are thousands of different cultures across the world, contributing to global diversity. People vary culturally in numerous ways, as each culture consists of distinct components that shape identity and social interactions. Individuals generally prefer the comfort of their own culture; however, in today's interconnected world, they frequently encounter cultural differences that present challenges. To overcome these challenges, it is essential to develop an understanding of other cultures. Effective communication and mutual awareness help foster cooperation and problem-solving within diverse communities. Living in a globalized world requires individuals to adopt a broader mindset, develop cultural competencies, and cultivate psychological adaptability to build strong relationships and navigate cross-cultural challenges. The present research concluded that students from different ethnic groups exhibit varying levels of ethnocentrism. Punjabi, Pathan, and Sindhi students generally did not experience significant difficulties in adapting to new social and cultural customs, norms, and regulations or in participating in intercultural and social activities. In contrast, students from Balti, Kashmiri, and Balochi ethnic backgrounds faced greater challenges in adjusting to new cultural environments and engaging in intercultural interactions.

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